

CONSTITUTION

(Fundamental Law)

of the
RUSSIAN
SOVIET FEDERATED
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

of January 21, 1937

As amended through May 27, 1949

Chapter I. The Social Structure

642 Art. 1. The Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic is a socialist State of workers and peasants.

Art. 2. The political foundation of the Russian SPFR is the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which grow and become strong as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists and the conquest of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Art. 3. In the Russian SPFR all power belongs to the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

471 Art. 4. The economic foundation of the Russian SPFR is the socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means and instruments of production established as the result of the liquidation of the capitalist system of economy, the abolition of private ownership of the means and instruments of production and the elimination of the exploitation of man by man.

421 Art. 5. Socialist property in the Russian SPFR exists either in the form of State property (the possession of the whole people), or in the form of co-operative and collective farm property (the possession of collective farms or co-operative associations).

672 Art. 6. The land, its natural deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, rail, water and air transport, banks, communications, large state-organized agricultural enterprises (State farms, machine and tractor stations and the like), as well as municipal enterprises and the bulk of dwelling houses in the cities and industrial localities, are state property, that is belong to the whole people.

421 474 Art. 7. The common enterprises of collective farms and co-operative organizations with their livestock and implements, and the products of the collective farms and co-operative organizations, as well as their common buildings, constitute the common socialist property of collective farms and co-operative organizations.

672 In addition to its basic income from the common collective farm enterprise, every household in a collective farm has for its personal use a small plot of household land and, as its personal property, a subsidiary husbandry on the plot, a dwelling house, livestock, poultry and minor agricultural implements — in accordance with the regulations of the agricultural artel.

423 Art. 8. The land occupied by collective farms is secured to them free of charge and for an unlimited time, that is, in perpetuity.

474 Art. 9. Alongside the socialist system of economy in the Russian SPFR the law permits the private economy of individual peasants and artisans based on their own work and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others.

421 Art. 10. The right of citizens to personal ownership of their incomes from work and of their savings, of their dwelling houses and subsidiary household economy, their household furniture and utensils, articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law.

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471 Art. 11. The economic life of the Russian SFSR is determined and directed by the State National-Economic Plan with the aim of increasing the public wealth, of steadily improving the material and cultural level of the working people and of consolidating the socialist independence of the country and strengthening its defensive capacity.

461 Art. 12. In the Russian SFSR work is a duty and a matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

The principle applied in the Russian SFSR is that of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

Chapter II. The State Structure

642 Art. 13. For the purpose of mutual assistance among the Union Republics along economic and political lines, as well as along the line of defence, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic voluntarily united with the other equal Soviet Socialist Republics, namely:

The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kirghis Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic and
The Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic

in a federal state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Proceeding from the aforesaid, the Russian SFSR ensures to the USSR, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside of the spheres set forth in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Russian SFSR exercises state authority independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

631 Art. 14. The Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic consists of the Altai, Krasnodar, Krasnoyarsk, Maritime, Stavropol and Khabarovsk Territories; the Archangel, Astrakhan, Briansk, Velikie Luki, Vladimir, Volgda, Voronezh, Gorky, Gruzny, Ivanovo, Irkutsk, Kaliningrad, Kalinin, Kaluga, Kemerovo, Kirov, Kostroma, Krimmer, Kuibyshev, Murgan, Mursk, Leningrad, Molotov, Moscow, Murmansk, Novgorod, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Orel, Penza, Pskov, Rostov, Riazan, Saratov, Sakhalin, Sverdlovsk, Smolensk, Stalingrad, Tambov, Tomsk, Tula, Tiumen, Ulianovsk, Cheliabinsk, Chita, Chkalov, Yaroslavl and Amur Regions; the Tatar, Bashkir, Dagestan, Buriat-Mongolian, Kabardinian, Komi, Mari, Mordovian, North Ossetian, Udmurt, Chuvash and Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics; and the Adyghe, Jewish, Circassian, Tuvanian, Khakass and Cherkess Autonomous Regions.

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This trend to expropriate the peasants and to overspecialize them as a means of political and economic control found its expression in the recent development of Bolshevik ideology. In the utterances of Party leaders and in the Soviet press it is being stressed that the conditions in the Soviet Union are already so advanced that the Soviet state is ready to move from socialism into the first levels of a limited Communism. This first phase of Communism will consist of the elimination of differences between industrial and agricultural work, between industrial workers and the peasantry ("Liquidating the contrast between the city and the village"). Thus it is pointed out, the old opposition between the country and the city will vanish and also cultural and psychological differences between these two strata will disappear. Every person will become engaged in a special "technical-engineering" task and all will be equal and like brothers.

As a result of such development, it is said that even the differences between the manual laborer and the intellectual worker will eventually be abolished and thus the classless and anarchic society envisaged in socialist writings and rooted in the traditions of the Slav culture will be finally achieved.¹¹ Productive forces will develop an abundance of all consumer goods whose distribution will be on the basis of exchange and according to one's needs. There will be no monetary relations and no differences in social status.

It is clearly and repeatedly emphasized, however, that nobody should mistake this change from socialism to communism as a "withering away" of the state. The state, say the Bolsheviks, must remain "strong" for the needs of defense,¹² until the Soviet system spreads over the entire earth.

II

Total power concentrated in the hands of Bolshevik conspirators as a means of perpetuation of their rule led to compulsory regimentation of all labor, to speed-up system, and to intensified differentiation in skill, income, and status within the working classes. The aim of these measures is to increase production and to control the working classes by breaking their group solidarity and by tying the laborer to his machine and the office worker to